



Shanghai Jiao Tong University

PS907 Positive Psychology

Instructor:	Nancy Liu, PhD	Email:	nancyhliu@outlook.com
Home Institution:	UC Berkeley	Office:	Faculty Office
Office Hours:	Schedule as needed, Faculty Office @ 10am		
Term:	2 July - 2 August, 2018	Credits:	4 units
Classroom:	303	Teaching Assistant(s):	Shuyuan Shi
Class Hours:	Monday through Thursday, 5.30-7.30 pm		
Discussion Session:	2 hours each week, conducted by teaching assistant(s), Tues 3-5pm		
Total Contact Hours:	66 contact hours (1 contact hour = 45 mins, 3000 mins in total)		
Required Texts (w/ ISBN):	Lyubomirsky, S. (2007). The How of Happiness. NY: Penguin Publishing Group. (THOH) (ISBN 978-1-1012-0280-7)		
Prerequisite:	N/A		



Course Overview

Prior to World War II, psychology had three stated principles: make the lives of people fulfilling, identify and enhance human excellence, and treat pathology. Proponents of positive psychology make the argument that over the past 60 years, psychology, particularly clinical psychology, has focused almost solely on the treatment of pathology and less-than-optimal functioning, while ignoring the first two goals of psychology. Researchers and practitioners interested in studying and promoting human potential have made the argument that psychology should study human strengths and the conditions that lead to human flourishing.

In this course we will consider research and theory related to the following questions: Why bother studying positive experiences? What conditions result in optimizing human potential and flourishing? What benefits are associated with various human strengths? Can we do things differently to meet our full potential or are we stuck wherever we are? Are there drawbacks in focusing on strengths and positive experiences? Can positive psychology help people flourish even in the face of adversity?

Many of the lessons in this course have experiential components. Therefore, you will not only be learning about the concepts and techniques related to positive psychology in the academic sense. You will also be learning through doing and, as such, will have knowledge based both on scientific review and personal experience.

Course Goals

In this course, students will:

- ✧ Develop an understanding of the underlying assumptions and basic questions associated with positive psychology.
- ✧ Acquire insight into their personal strengths and virtues. Additionally, students will be exposed to exercises that have been posited to increase these strengths and help people respond to adversity in constructive ways that allow them to flourish.
- ✧ Cultivate an understanding of the various dimensions of subjective well-being and the application of these dimensions to daily functioning.
- ✧ Become familiar with research that supports or refutes the principles, strategies, and skills associated with positive psychology.

Grading Policy

1. Course grades will be based on total points earned from the following activities:

Exams: 3 (2 midterms and a final) * 25 points each = 75 points

Response papers: 2 * 12.5 points each 25 points

The majority of your grade will be based on three in-class examinations. Exam questions will be primarily in the form of multiple choice items and short answers. The exams will cover all



reading material (including reading material not covered in class) and all lecture/class material (including material not covered in the readings). It is *very important* to attend class. There will be class discussions and demonstrations in class that will not appear in your reading materials but *will* appear on your exams. *NOTE: Per SJTU policy, >6 absences automatically result in a failure of the course.

Number grade	Letter grade	GPA
90-100	A	4.0
85-89	A-	3.7
80-84	B+	3.3
75-79	B	3.0
70-74	B-	2.7
67-69	C+	2.3
65-66	C	2.0
62-64	C-	1.7
60-61	D	1.0
≤59	F (Failure)	0

2. Papers

You will turn in 2 short (1-page, single-spaced, 12-point font) papers applying principles in real life. Topics will be assigned one week before the papers are due. Paper will focus on what you did, how often you did it, related emotions, thoughts, and behaviors and how this experience fits into the larger research..

3. Academic Misconduct

No plagiarism or cheating will be tolerated. This means among other things that you will not submit someone else’s work as your own, copy someone else’s work, or cheat in any other way. When you draw on others’ work, you must cite that work properly.



Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
WEEK 1		
2-Jul	Introduction	
3-Jul	What is Positive Psychology and Why do we Need It?	THOH Chapter 1
4-Jul	Positive Emotions: Pleasure and Happiness	THOH Chapter 2, pp 38-47
5-Jul	Positive Emotions: Broaden and Build	Fredrickson (2001)
WEEK 2		
9-Jul	Acquisition and Adaptation	THOH Ch 3; 1st reaction assigned
10-Jul	Savoring	THOH Chapter 7, pp 190-204
11-Jul	FIRST MIDTERM EXAM	
12-Jul	Positive Personality: Character Strengths	http://www.viacharacter.org/www/The-Survey
WEEK 3		
16-Jul	Hope and Optimism	THOH, Chapter 4, pp 101-111; First reaction paper due
17-Jul	Humility and Other Virtues	Exline (2008)
18-Jul	Positive Self	Neff (2008); Kernis & Heppner (2008)
19-Jul	Positive Motivation	THOH, pp 205-226; 2nd reaction assigned
WEEK 4		
23-Jul	Flow	THOH , pp 180-189
24-Jul	SECOND MIDTERM EXAM	
25-Jul	Mindfulness and Meditation	THOH , pp. 240-244; Kabat-Zinn (2005)
26-Jul	Gratitude and Forgiveness	THOH ,Chapter 4, pp. 88-100; Chapter 6, pp 169-179 2nd reaction paper due
WEEK 5		
30-Jul	Positive Relationships	THOH , pp. 138-149
31-Jul	Creating Good Relationships	Crocker & Canevello (2016)
1-Aug	Overcoming Adversity with Positivity	THOH , Chapter 6, pp 150-168
2-Aug	FINAL EXAM	